

# Is Your Bible the Right One?



By Richard Jordan

"For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God..." (II Corinthians 2:17)

For over 350 years the Authorized Version, commonly known as the King James Bible, was used by the Body of Christ at large and confidently believed to be the Word of God. In the last 3 or 4 decades all this has changed.

Now we are faced with a variable Babel of confusion over the various Bible versions and English translations continuously being introduced on the market. There is a serious question which must be faced: Are these modern versions really reliable - are they really versions or, as many have come to claim, perversions of the Word of God?

Our examination of this important subject will by no means be exhaustive, given the space available to us here, but we hope to give the reader enough information that as an informed believer you can make a sound decision as to which Bible is reliable and which version is not.

A bit of background to begin with: In 1881 there was introduced into public circulation a new Bible text. It came through the work of the Revision Committee which produced the (English) Revised Version, 1881, and the American Standard Version, 1901.

This new Greek text developed by the Revision Committee, under the leadership and pressure of Westcott and Hort, is the basis of modern translations. It has been used to replace the Received Text of the KJV and its predecessors. There is, however, a growing awareness that this new Greek text is not reliable-and more and more are returning, we have, to the KJV.

As we compare verses, we will see why this is true. We have objective evidence as the reliability of the KJV as opposed to the new bible versions-overwhelming evidence that new versions are not simply better translations. Nor are they simply revisions of the KJV. Rather they are new and different Bible texts which often question, discredit and water down important and vital truths basic to the Christian faith (cf. Genesis 3:1).

## THERE IS A DIFFERENCE

Let's start by understanding that there is a great deal of difference between the KJV and the modern versions. This difference is not simply a translations difference. It is in fact a basic textual difference: they are translations of two different lines of Greek texts. A few examples must suffice:

In Matthew 1:25 the words "her firstborn son" are consistently omitted by modern versions. In Matthew 6:13 the ending of "For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen" is omitted. This explains why the Protestant version of this prayer is more lengthy than the Roman Catholic rendition. The KJV is the text of the Protestant Reformation while the new versions embrace the Roman reading.

Verses such as Matthew 17:21 and 23:14 are omitted entirely, while in Matthew 24:36 the words "nor the Son" are added.

There are literally hundreds of these type textual alternations which have nothing to do with translation. They come because of the difference in what is being translated-the Greek texts being used are substantially different. And the difference is by no means insignificant.

In the modern versions numerous verses have been changed in such a way as to affect truths basic to the Christian faith. While many are quite subtle, they nonetheless provide the type of objective evidence which convicts these new versions of perverting God's Word. Again, space allows only a few examples:

In John 1:27 the words "is preferred before me" are omitted, so that John is made to say only that Christ came after him. In John 6:47 "he that believeth on me hath everlasting life" is changed to read: "he who believes has everlasting life" (NIV) The words "on me" are left out [footnote 1].

John 6:65, 14:12 and 16:10, have Christ calling to God "the Father instead of "my Father," as in KJV. In Revelation 1:11 the phrase "I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last," referring to Christ-and an obvious proof that Jesus Christ is the Jehovah of Isaiah 44:6-is omitted. Other titles of Christ which indicate His deity are regularly omitted or altered in such a way as to not connote deity (e.g., Matthew 27:64, 9:35; I Corinthians 15:47, 16:22; Romans 9:6, 14:10; Colossians 1:2; II Timothy 4:22, etc.).

Other vital truths are also affected. For examples, in I Corinthians 5:7 the words "for us" are omitted, affecting the doctrine of the vicarious death of Christ by suggesting merely that He was sacrificed and did die, but not necessarily "for us" (see also I Peter 4:1). It isn't surprising that Hebrews 1:3 omits the words "by Himself" from the phrase: "When He had by Himself purged our sins." There is also Colossians 1:14 where the clause "through His blood" is omitted, casting doubt on the necessity of the shedding of Christ's blood for redemption.

Then there is Luke 2:33 where the words "Joseph and his mother" are changed to read: "The child's father and mother," implying that Christ was not virgin-born. Not even a note of explanation is given. Surely the evidence for such an important change should have been offered.

In Luke 24:51 the words "And carried up into heaven," referring to our Lord's ascension, are omitted. In John 16:16 the words "because I go to the Father" are omitted.

By now it should be obvious that the new versions are not simply "better translations" or a revision of KJV. Rather they are new and different Bible texts. Nor is it true that they contain only minor changes which do not affect basic meanings.

The great number of passages (we have given only examples) altered or omitted so as to water down or attack the very truths the Bible teaches, especially where the person and work of Christ are concerned, is clear evidence that modern versions are dangerous to spiritual health.

1. We are using the New International Version for comparison quotes because of its present popularity. What is true of it however, is consistently true of other versions.

## SERIOUS QUESTIONS

Because of the subtle nature of the deception used to corrupt God's Word, we want to offer three examples of the absolute devastation caused by these new versions. The complacent nature of current thinking in regard to these issues has caused some to pass off as only a minor irritant the numerous passages which are altered so as to eliminate or dilute statements on the deity of Christ, the virgin birth, the vicarious atonement, etc. Because of this, and the emotional allegiance often attached to those recommending the modern versions, we ask our readers to consider the impact of these three passages on their faith. These three passages are irrefutable, objective evidence that modern versions are unsafe.

1. Matthew 5:22: Often it is difficult to grasp the impact of what seems to an innocent omission. Here is a verse where this syndrome is demonstrated to be a subtle trap leading to spiritual destruction. In KJV the verse reads,

"But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire."

The NIV renders the verse thus:

"But I tell you that anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to his brother, 'Raca,' is answerable to the Sanhedrin. But anyone who says, 'You fool!' will be in danger of the fire of hell."

Did you catch the omission? The phrase "without a cause" is omitted from the statement "Whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment." This does not seem to be too very consequential at first glance. But for a Bible student who is serious about believing and honoring the Word of God, this verse is devastating.

If the reader is diligent it will not be long before he comes upon Mark 3:5, where we are told about our Lord:

"And when he had LOOKED ROUND ABOUT ON THEM WITH ANGER, BEING GRIEVED FOR THE HARDNESS OF THEIR HEARTS..."

The problem is obvious: If the NIV reading is to stand, our Lord is condemned by His own words.

This is no small matter! By this seemingly unimportant omission in Matthew 5:22 the modern versions have destroyed the sinlessness of the Lord Jesus Christ and established him as a sinner, condemned for failure to live by His own declaration.

2. Mark 1:2: This verse brings up the dementia associated with the use of modern versions. The following change is so amazing that we doubt anyone would believe it if the record was not clear. In KJV the verse reads,

"As IT IS WRITTEN IN THE PROPHETS, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee."

The NIV rendering is consistent with other modern versions:

"IT IS WRITTEN IN ISAIAH THE PROPHET: I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way."

Any reference edition or center column reference will quickly establish the problem for modern versions: The quotation in Mark 1:2 is not from Isaiah. It is from Malachi 3:1. Mark 1:3 is a quote from Isaiah 40:3. Thus two prophets are being quoted, not one. The statement in NIV (and other new versions) is simply false.

This is simply a case of the Greek text and resultant English translation being wrong. It is a mistake, plain and simple. No amount of sophistry can argue around it. Notice the verse does not say, "It was spoken in Isaiah" (as in the case of Matthew 27:9's quote of Jeremiah). No. The quote is clearly said to have been "written in Isaiah."

Two possibilities exist: Either Isaiah, as we have it, is incomplete, omitting the quote (and thus the Bible itself so not complete), or Mark is mistaken, having given the wrong reference (which would mean that the Holy Spirit made a mistake writing the Scripture).

These two choices leave us in the unenviable position of having to adjust our understanding of Biblical infallibility. The doctrine of infallibility will not stand the test if the reading of the new versions is accepted.

3. Hebrews 3:16: We add this reference because it too seems to be too impossible to be real. Unfortunately it is all too real-and illustrative of the caliber of modern versions. KJV renders the verse this way:

"For some, when they had heard, did provoke: howbeit NOT ALL THAT CAME OUT OF EGYPT BY MOSES."

The verses changed in NIV to read:

"Who were they who heard and rebelled? WHERE THEY NOT ALL THOSE MOSES LED OUT OF EGYPT?"

In other words, KJV says that "not all that came out of Egypt by Moses" rebelled while NIV indicates that "all those Moses led out of Egypt" did rebel. Any junior in Sunday School knows which of the two is right!

After four decades of wilderness wanderings, Moses addressed Israel as she prepares to enter the promised land. Deuteronomy 29:2 tells us,

"And Moses called unto all Israel, and said unto them, Ye have seen all that the Lord did BEFORE YOUR EYES IN THE LAND OF EGYPT UNTO PHARAOH..."

(cf. Deuteronomy 1:30).

Obviously some of these who were in Egypt and saw with their own eyes what God had done there also entered into the promised land, having not rebelled in the wilderness. As we said, any junior aged boy or girl could name two of them: Joshua and Caleb! One wonders what the translators of the NIV and other versions have been reading.

Why should we accept a Bible version that is not true-especially when we have one that is? Why would we accept a Bible that openly denies the sinlessness of our Lord and that makes the doctrine of Scriptural infallibility a falsehood?

THE BOOK WILL DEFEND ITSELF

We do not fear for God's Word, He'll take care of it! We fear only for its readers. These new versions are simply unsafe to rely on.

We trust this information will help our readers to understand this issue more clearly. Compare the verses for yourself and you will see that we do have a reliable, dependable copy of the Word of God in our own language. God has preserved His Word and made it available to us in our own language in an absolutely dependable form, the King James Bible.